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PROTESTANT
CATECHISM;
Shewing the
PRINCIPAL ERRORS
OF THE
CHURCH of R O M E.

The Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils; forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe, and know the truth. 1 *Tim.* iv. 1, 3.

Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God. 1 *John* iv. 1

Come out from among them, and be ye separate, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you, and will be a father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and my daughters, saith the Lord God Almighty. 2 *Cor.* vi. 17, 18.

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A

PROTESTANT CATECHISM;

Shewing the

Principal ERRORS

OF THE

CHURCH of *ROME*.

WHAT Religion do you profess?
A. I profess myself a Protestant.

Q. What do you mean by a Protestant?

A. One that admits no Doctrines as Rules of Faith, but such as are contained in the Holy Scriptures; and who is called a Protestant, from his protesting against the Errors of the Church of Rome.

Q. What do you understand by a Papist or Roman Catholick?

*A. 2**A. One*

A. One who professeth Subjection to the *Pope* as Head of Christ's Universal Church on Earth, and to all the Precepts and Constitutions of the Church of *Rome*; and to believe all the Doctrines and Precepts taught by the Church, many of which Precepts and Doctrines we Protestants judge to be sinful and erroneous, as being contrary to the Word of God, or at least without any Foundation therein.

Q. Will you name some of these to me?

A. They may be reduced to three general Heads. First, Those Precepts and Constitutions of the Church of *Rome* that are sinful in their own Natures, as being directly contrary to the Commands of God. Secondly, Those Doctrines of the Church of *Rome* that either plainly encourage Men in sinful Practices, or insensibly betray them into Sin. Thirdly, Those Articles of Belief taught by the Church of *Rome*, which being contrary to the Holy Scriptures, are dangerous Errors.

I. Q. What are those Precepts and Constitutions of the Church of *Rome*, that are directly contrary to God's Commands?

A. They are the five following more especially.

1st, The denying to the common People the free Use of the Holy Scriptures.

2^{dly}, The denying the Cup to the People in the Holy Sacrament.

3dly, The ordaining publick Prayers to be offered up in a Language not understood by the common People.

4thly, The ordaining Prayers to be made to Saints and Angels.

5thly, The ordaining Images to be set up in their Churches for the People to bow down before them.

Q. How do you prove that the denying the free Use of the Holy Scriptures to the People, is directly contrary to the Word of God?

A. Because every Man is expressly commanded to read them, "Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life," *John* v. 39. The Apostle Charges "all the brethren to read his Epistle," *1 Thess.* v. 27. and God by *Moses* commanded all so to read and understand the Holy Scriptures, as to be able to instruct their Children out of them; "therefore shall ye lay up these my words in your hearts, and in your souls—and ye shall teach them your children," &c. *Deut.* xi. 18, 19. And the *Bereans* are commended for "searching the Scriptures daily," *Acts* xvii. 11. which Commendations prove it to be a Duty to read the Scriptures, and amount to a Command.

Q. How do you prove the denying to the People the Cup in the Holy Sacrament, to be directly contrary to the Word of God?

A. It is directly contrary to Christ's Institution; "Drink ye all of this," *Matt.* xxvi.

27. and the Apostle *Paul* commandeth every one who eateth of the Bread, to drink likewise of the Cup. 1 *Cor.* xi. 28.

Q. How do you prove, that the ordaining publick Prayers to be offered up in a Language not understood by the People, is contrary to the expresse Commands of God?

A. The Apostle *St Paul* forbids this Practice in the strongest Terms, through the whole fourteenth Chapter of his first Epistle to the *Corinthians*. "If I pray in an unknown tongue, my spirit prayeth, but my understanding is unfruitful, (as to others:) How shall he that is unlearned say Amen, if he understand not what thou sayest?" And again, "If there come in those that are unlearned, and unbelievers, will they not say ye are mad?"

Q. How do you prove that the worshipping and praying to Saints and Angels, ordained by the Church of *Rome*, is contrary to the expresse Commands of God?

A. Because such a Practice is expressly forbidden, *Coloss.* ii. 18, 19. "Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility, and worshipping of Angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, not holding the head (*Christ Jesus*.)" And we read that Angels have refused this Worship: "See thou do it not (saith the Angel to *St John*) for I am thy fellow servant; worship God." *Rev.* xix. 10.

Q. How

Q. How do you prove the ordaining of images to be set up in Churches, that the people may bow down before them, is contrary to the expresse Commands of God?

A. That Practice is as expressly forbidden as in Words it can be, by the second Commandment, *Exod. xx. 4, 5.* "Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image; thou shalt not bow down to them, nor worship them: and *Deut. xvi. 22.* Neither shalt thou set thee up any image, which the Lord thy God doth hate."

Q. Are not the Papists sensible that this their Practice is contrary to these and such like Commandments?

A. They seem to be so: For in several of their Catechisms the second Commandment is left out; because it so manifestly condemns their Practice: And to make up the Number, they split the Tenth into two.

Q. But don't they declare, that they do not direct their Worship to the Image; but pray to Christ and the Saints through these Images?

A. They do so; but this cannot excuse them from the Sin of Idolatry: For you see the Commandment says, "Thou shalt not make any graven image. Thou shalt not bow down before it. Thou shalt not set it up." And yet all Papists do this in their Churches and Chapels, without any Scruple.

Q. But what do you think of worshipping the

the blessed Virgin; to whom the Papists address many more Prayers than to Jesus Christ.

A. It is downright Idolatry; because the Blessed Virgin, though she be glorified in Heaven, is still a meer Creature, and there is neither Command nor Example for such Worship in the Word of God: which is our only safe Guide.

Q. Did our Saviour encourage the Worshipping of his Mother?

A. No, but the contrary; for when she made an address to Him, He replies; "Woman, what have I to do with thee?" *John* ii. 4. And when He was told that his Mother and his Brethren were standing without seeking Him, He answered; "Who is my mother, or my brethren?" without vouchsafing to take Notice of them.

Q. Why did our Saviour treat his Mother with so little Respect upon that Occasion?

A. Probably to discourage that Idolatry which He foresaw the Church of *Rome* would fall into by worshipping Her: For if He had intended that Christians should worship her, He would have treated her with more Regard in the Eyes of the People.

II. *Q.* Besides the forementioned Precept and Constitutions of the Church of *Rome* which you have proved to be sinful, you say that there are some Doctrines of that Church which either plainly encourage Men in sinful Practices

Practices, or insensibly betray them into Sin:
What are the Principal of this Kind?

A. I shall mention *Seven*, among many others. The first is, That Christians may do Works of *Supererogation*; that is, that so Men may have more Virtue than is necessary to their Salvation; and consequently, that they have some Merit to spare, for the Benefit of others, who want it.

Q. How do you prove this to be false Doctrine?

A. From the fifth Chapter of *St Matthew*, v. 48. Our Saviour commands us, "to be perfect, as our Father in heaven is perfect." And in the seventeenth Chapter of *St Luke*, ver. 10. He bids Men, "after they have done all things that are commanded them, to say, We are unprofitable servants, we have done that which was our duty to do."

Q. How do you prove that one Man cannot share in another Man's Merits?

A. From these Words of God, *Ezek. xviii.* 4, 20. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him." And *Gal. vi.* 4, 5. "Let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another; for every man shall bear his own burden."

Q. What are the ill consequences of this Doctrine?

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A. This Persuasion, that a Man has more Merit than is necessary, will destroy Humility, and nourish Pride, and a Reliance on other Mens Merit, to supply a Want of it in himself; it will naturally make him more remiss in his Duty, and more apt to indulge himself in Sin.

Q. What other Doctrines of Popery encourage Men in sinful Practices?

A. The Doctrine of *Indulgences*, or Pardon for Sins, which the Pope grants for Money; but this gives such a Loose to Vice, and is so manifestly contrary to the Word of God, that the Papists begin to be ashamed of it, at least in Protestant Countries.

Q. What is the third Doctrine that encourages Men to sin?

A. That Faith is not to be kept with Hereticks; and that the Pope can absolve Subjects from their Oaths to Protestant Princes. This Doctrine has encouraged Subjects to rebel against their lawful Sovereigns, contrary to the express Command of *St Paul*: "Let every soul be subject to the higher powers; the powers that be, are ordained of God." *Rom. xiii. 1.*

Q. What is the fourth Doctrine of the same Kind?

A. That Hereticks are to be persecuted and destroyed.

Q. Whom do the Papists call Hereticks?

A. All Christians who do not believe their
false

false Doctrines, and join in their idolatrous Worship; but especially Protestants.

Q. How have they treated Protestants?

A. Where they have had Power, they have endeavoured to root them out by Fire and Sword, and all Kinds of Cruelty.

Q. How doth this appear?

A. From many Instances, which are notorious to all the World; particularly from the Murder of many thousand Protestants in the famous Massacre at *Paris*.

From the Burning alive of several learned and godly Bishops, and others in *England*, in the Reign of Queen *Mary*.

And more especially, from the bloody Murder of about “ an hundred thousand “ Protestants, of all Ages and Sexes, in *Ireland*,” on the 23d Day of *October*, in the Year 1641; the Memory whereof is solemnized in their Churches on that Day in every Year, by Virtue of an *Act of Parliament* made for that Purpose.

Q. The Papists thought it meritorious to commit these Cruelties upon Protestants: How then do you prove it unlawful?

A. Because it is contrary to all Goodness and Mercy, which makes Men resemble God, and also to the Christian Religion.

Q. How do you prove this last?

A. From the sixth of St *Luke*, ver. 36.
 “ Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father
 “ in heaven also is merciful. *Eph. iv. 32.*
 “ Be

“Be kind to one another, tender hearted,
 “forgiving one another, even as God for
 “Christ’s sake hath forgiven you.” *John*
 “xiii. 35. By this shall all men know that
 “ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to
 “another.” *Luke ix. 56.* “For the son of
 “man is not come to destroy mens lives, but
 “to save them.” The Papists therefore, in
 justifying their Cruelties against innocent Pro-
 testants, shew that they are unworthy Dis-
 ciples of Christ, and that Popery is a very
 bad Religion.

Q. What is the fifth Doctrine of the Church
 of *Rome*, that either plainly leads, or insensi-
 bly betrays the Ignorant and Unwary into sin-
 ful Practices?

A. That every Man must without further
 Examination, submit his Faith to the Deci-
 sions of their Church.

Q. How do you prove that every Christian
 is obliged to examine and judge for himself,
 and not blindly submit his Faith to the Deci-
 sion of another?

A. It appears from hence, *St John* en-
 joins all Christians “not to believe every
 “spirit, but to try the spirits whether they
 “be of God. 1 *John iv. 1.* “Prove all things,
 “(saith *St Paul*) hold fast that which is good.
 “1 *Thess. v. 21.* Though we, or an angel
 “from heaven, preach any other gospel unto
 “you, than that which we have preached
 “unto you, let him be accursed.” *Gal. i. 8.*

Q. How

Q. How doth it appear that this Doctrine, That Christians must submit their Faith to the Decisions of their Church, betrays Men into Sin?

A. It hath been before shewn in several Instances, that they have commanded many Things both to be believed and practised, that are contrary to the Word of God; which proves the Point in Hand.

Q. What is the sixth Doctrine of this Kind, taught and maintained by the Church of Rome?

A. That there are other Mediators between God and Man, (besides Jesus Christ) such as Saints and Angels, and especially the Virgin Mary.

Q. How do you prove that this Doctrine is false?

A. The Word of God expressly declares Christ Jesus to be our only Mediator. 1 *Tim.* ii. 5. "There is one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; and the Reason follows, "who gave himself a ransom for all." And this is more than can be said for any Saint or Angel; who cannot be our Mediators, because they did not ransom us.

Q. How do you prove that this Doctrine betrays Men into Sin?

A. 1st, Because it is the Occasion of their dishonouring Christ, the only Mediator.

2^{dly}, Because it leads them into direct Idolatry,

latry, by giving the Creatures that Worship which is due to God only.

Q. What is the seventh Doctrine of Popery that betrays Men into sinful Practices?

A. The Doctrine of *Transubstantiation*.

Q. What do they mean by that Word?

A. They mean a Thing still much harder and which they themselves do not understand, namely, that in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, the Bread and Wine, immediately after Consecration, are turned into the very Body and Blood of Christ.

Q. Do they affirm, that upon the Priest pronouncing those four Words, "This is my Body," the Bread and Wine are turned into the real Flesh and Blood, Skin and Bones of Christ?

A. That is their Meaning.

Q. What say you to this Opinion?

A. That it is a very absurd and pernicious Error, which overturns all Knowledge of Religion? inasmuch as it destroys the Evidence of our Senses, of our Reason, and the Holy Scriptures, on which all Knowledge and Religion must be grounded.

Q. How doth it contradict the Evidence of our Senses?

A. Because our Sight, our Taste, and our Smell, all tell us, that the Bread and Wine remain after Consecration what they were before.

Q. A

Q. And what will be the Consequence, if our Senses may constantly deceive us in the plainest Cases?

A. Very bad; for our Saviour proved his Doctrine by the Miracles which he wrought before Mens Eyes: If therefore Mens Senses may deceive them in the plainest Cases, there is an End of all Miracles at once; and this is great Proof of the Truth of Christianity quite taken away.

Q. How doth it contradict our Reason?

A. Our Reason informs us, that it is impossible that the same Body should be in different Places at the same Time.

Q. And what say the Scriptures concerning it?

A. That the Body of Christ is in Heaven, where it is to "remain until the times of the restitution of all things," *Acts* iii. 21. Christ himself, even after Consecration, calls the Wine which he gave to his Disciples "the fruit of the Vine," *Matt.* xxvi. 29. And St Paul calls what each Communicant receives Bread and Wine: "Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that Bread, and drink of that Cup." *1 Cor.* vi. 28.

Q. How then are we to understand those Words of our Saviour, *viz.* *Matt.* xxvi. 26. "This is my body?"

A. As every Protestant and Papist understands these Words, "This rock was Christ," *Cor.* x. 4. That as the Rock in the Wilderness

Q. A. ness

ness represented Christ, so, "This bread is my body," signifies, This Bread represents my Body, and is a Memorial of it to you; for which Reason, our Saviour adds, "This do in remembrance of me."

Q. You said, that this Doctrine of Transubstantiation betrays Men into Sin. How does this appear?

A. It betrays them into Idolatry, the Sin above all others the most condemned by God in the Holy Scriptures.

Q. How doth it betray them into Idolatry?

A. The Papists being taught, that the Bread and Wine, after Consecration, are really changed into the Body and Blood of Christ, they think it proper to pay divine Worship to it: But as we have proved that it does not to continue the same after Consecration that they were before, they worship a Creature which is the grossest Idolatry.

III. Q. But you said, that there are many Doctrines maintained by the Church of Rome, which are contrary to the Word of God, and therefore pernicious Errors; recite on up some of them:

A. The Principal are these seven, viz.

First, "That the Scripture doth not contain all Things necessary to salvation."

Secondly, "That it is obscure in some Points essential to Faith."

Thirdly, "That the Pope is St Peter's Successor"

Successor, and the supreme Head of the Christian Church."

Fourthly, "That God hath established in his Church one supreme Judge, who is Infallible in Matters of Faith."

Fifthly, "That in the Mass Jesus Christ is offered up by the Priest a Sacrifice for the Sins of the Living and Dead."

Sixthly, "That the Souls of the Faithful, after this Life, go to a Place, by them called *Purgatory*, in order to be cleansed from all their Sins before they enter into Heaven."

Seventhly, and lastly, "That the Church of *Rome* is the only true Church, from which if a Man separate, he cannot be saved."

Q. How do you prove, that it is contrary to the Word of God to maintain, that the Holy Scriptures do not contain all Things necessary to Salvation?

A. It appears from those Words of the Apostle, 2 *Tim.* iii. 16, 17. "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

Q. How do you prove that the Scripture is not obscure in essential Articles of Faith?

A. The *Psalmist* saith, that "the Word of God is a lamp unto his feet, and a light unto his path," *Psal.* cxix. 105. and St *Paul* affirms, "That if our gospel be hid, it

“it is hid to those that are lost: in whom
 “the God of this world hath blinded their
 “minds,” 2 *Cor.* iv. 3, 4.

Q. How do you prove it to be an Error to
 affirm, that the Pope, as *St Peter's* Successor
 is supreme Head of the Christian Church?

A. Though the Pope were in Truth *St*
Peter's Successor, which the Papists have ne-
 ver been able to prove; yet he ought not to
 take more Authority upon him than the
Apostle had; but *St Peter* had not more
 Authority over the Churches, than the other
Apostles.

Q. How do you prove this?

A. It appears from several Passages of sacred
 Scripture: *St Paul* saith of himself, that “he
 “was nothing behind the very chiefest
 “*Apostles*,” 2 *Cor.* xii. 11. and upon Oc-
 casion “he withstood *St Peter* to the face
 “because he was to be blamed,” *Gal.* ii.
 11. The *Apostles* who were at “*Jerusalem*
 “appointed *Peter* to go to *Samaria*,” which
 they could not have done if he had been their
 Superior, *Acts* viii. 14. and at his return from
Cæsarea, the Church of *Jerusalem* call him to
 an Account for his Conduct, *Acts* xi. 2.

Q. How do you prove it to be an Error
 to affirm, that God hath established in his
 Church an infallible Judge in Matters of Faith?
 Explain a little more fully the Doctrine of the
 Church of *Rome* on this Article, and what
 they understand by that unerring Judge.

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A. Though this be with them a most important Article, yet are they not agreed among themselves about it; some by this infallible Judge understand the Pope, some the General Councils approved by the Pope, and others the General Councils, whether approved by the Pope or not.

Q. What have you to object to this Doctrine?

A. Many undoubted Facts overthrow it; such as the capital Errors, into which several Popes and Councils have fallen; the Inconsistencies of their Conduct, and Contradiction of their Decrees; one Pope condemning what his Predecessor had approved; one Council rejecting the Decrees of another Council.

Q. Have you any other Reason against it?

A. If God had appointed an infallible Judge for all Christians to resort unto, the Holy Scriptures would certainly have told us where to find him; but the Holy Scriptures are so far from declaring such a Judge, that on the contrary they require every Christian to examine and judge for himself, as we have already proved.

Q. You say the Doctrine of the Mass is contrary to the Scripture; inasmuch as the Papists affirm, that a Sacrifice is therein constantly offered for the Sins both of the Living and the Dead. What have you to urge against it?

A. Several Passages of Holy Writ. *Heb.* 25, 26. "Christ doth not offer himself often,

“ often, for then must he often have suffered
 “ to put away sin by the sacrifice of him
 “ self.” And again, “ Without shedding
 “ blood there is no remission of sins,” He
 ix. 22.

Q. What do you infer from these Passages

A. That since there is no shedding of Blood
 in the Mass, and our Saviour Christ doth not
 suffer anew, there is not therefore any Sacrifice
 or Remission of Sins in the Mass.

Q. You have said, that it is an Error to
 affirm, “ That the Souls of the Faithful
 “ after this Life, go to a Place by the Pa-
 “ pists called *Purgatory*, in order to be clean-
 “ ed from all their Sins, before they enter
 “ into Heaven;” by what Arguments
 you refute this Opinion.

A. We read in Scripture, “ that the blood
 “ of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin
 “ *John i. 7.* We do not therefore stand in
 need of any other *Purgatory*; so that the No-
 tion of *Purgatory* is manifestly injurious to
 the Satisfaction of Christ, as it implies it
 to be insufficient.

Q. The Church of *Rome* calls itself the
 only true Church, from which if a Man sepa-
 rate, he cannot be saved; how doth the
 Falseness of this Doctrine appear?

A. It appears from the chief Marks of a
 true Church, which are, to teach Doctrine
 that are agreeable to the Word of God, and
 reject all those that are contrary to it: No

we have before shewn in many Instances, that the Doctrines of the Church of *Rome* are inconsistent with, and contrary to the Holy Scriptures; it therefore cannot be the true Church, but must be a very corrupt one.

Q. What have you to conclude from this account you have given of the Church of *Rome*?

A. I have two Conclusions to draw from

The 1st is, That they are very unhappy who have been educated in that Church; for a Religion so corrupted must endanger their Salvation.

2^{dly}, That the Protestant Religion is the most ancient; because the Christian Religion came pure out of the Hands of Christ and his Apostles, and all that the Protestants have done is to restore it to its first Purity, by purging and refining it from that Dross which the Church of *Rome* had mixed with it.

Q. What think you then of those who separate from the Church of *Rome*; may they do it lawfully?

A. They not only may, but are indispensably obliged to do so; lest by joining in their idolatrous Worship, and sinful Practices, they bring on them the Judgments of God. They should apply to themselves that Commandment of the Lord; "Come out from among them, and be ye separate, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you,"
"and

“and ye shall be my sons and my daughters”
 “saith the Lord God Almighty.” 1 Cor.
 17, 18.

Q. If so, what is your Design?

A. My Design, with the Help of God, to live and die in the Protestant Faith, it is contained in the wholesome Word of God, and for no worldly Consideration whatsoever to submit to the sinful Doctrines and Practices of the Church of *Rome*: And I beseech my God to give me his Grace, that I may make a publick and constant Profession of the true Religion; and add to it the Practice of a godly, righteous, and sober Life.

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